

Tiger Salamander larvae



Digger Crayfish (primary burrower)



Some of the unique critters YOU might find in the wetlands!

Fairy Shrimp (ephemeral pond indicator)



Blue-spotted Salamander



For more information
OR to register for orientation
visit:
[http://county.milwaukee.gov/
CitizenScienceOpportunities](http://county.milwaukee.gov/CitizenScienceOpportunities)



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Milwaukee County Department of Parks,
Recreation and Culture



Milwaukee County Parks Natural Areas Program's **Wetland Monitoring Program**

Learn How YOU Can Help
Protect Unique Local
Wetlands & Wildlife!



(Volunteer holding two blue-spotted salamanders!)

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What is the Wetland Monitoring Program?

Milwaukee County Parks places a high value on both permanent and ephemeral wetlands within natural areas, because these wetlands serve as crucial habitat for various species of amphibians, reptiles, and invertebrates. These wetlands and the organisms that inhabit them, particularly amphibians, are highly sensitive to environmental change and/or degradation. The threat of degradation is high in urban natural areas if sites are not properly managed, therefore, knowing the location of ephemeral wetlands and the potential they may have for sustaining sensitive and rare amphibian and invertebrate (crayfish) populations is critical.



(An aquatic funnel trap full of blue-spotted salamanders!)

Since 2009, Natural Areas Staff and volunteers have verified the presence of approximately 400 ephemeral wetlands within select portions of the Park System. The next step towards planning and prioritizing the management of these sensitive areas is monitoring to determine the presence and distribution of amphibian, bird, and invertebrate (crayfish) species utilizing both ephemeral wetlands and other wetland complexes within the Park System. When unique wildlife populations are documented, such as blue-spotted salamanders, wood frogs, and/or primary burrowing crayfish, the sites in which they are encountered become a priority for habitat restoration and management for those species.

What is an EPHEMERAL POND?

Ephemeral wetlands are temporary bodies of water that appear in spring as the snow melts and typically dry up by late summer or early fall. This cycle repeats each year. Due to the wet-dry cycle, these wetlands do not ordinarily support fish populations but are crucial habitat for some breeding amphibians and invertebrates. Without fish predation, eggs laid by frogs, salamanders and other amphibians are more likely to hatch and young are more likely to survive until adulthood. As a result these wetlands are very important to amphibian and invertebrate conservation.



(An ephemeral wetland at Falk Park)

What is involved in Citizen Monitoring?

We are looking for volunteers to visit assigned wetlands multiple times throughout March-June in 2015 to gather essential data on sensitive wildlife population inhabiting them! **Volunteers will be trained and provided with wetland monitoring kits** to conduct amphibian egg mass surveys, aquatic funnel trapping for salamanders and crayfish, as well as a call back box for secretive marsh bird surveys!



(Salamander egg mass found during a visual search)

How can YOU get involved?

Step 1:

Attend one of the Wetland Monitoring Program Orientations on either September 24 or February 11, 2015, from 6-8 p.m. at Wehr Nature Center, and select your monitoring site!

Step 2:

Attend a mandatory spring 2015 Wetland Monitoring Training in March to receive your Monitoring Kit!

Step 3:

Conduct two aquatic funnel trapping sessions (4-5 days each) checking traps each day for salamanders and crayfish!

Conduct a total of three visual searches for amphibian egg masses and aquatic invertebrates from March-June at your site!

Conduct a total of three secretive marsh bird call back surveys at your site!